Great Need, Great Power, Great Peace

Luke 8:43–48

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Introduction

And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone. She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, and immediately her discharge of blood ceased. And Jesus said, ***who was it that touched me?*** *When all denied it, Peter said, Master, the crowds surround you and are pressing in on you. But Jesus said,* ***someone touched me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me****. And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. And he said to her,* ***daughter, your faith has made you well, go in peace****.*

Luke drops us into this scene without warning. Jesus is on his way to the house of Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue whose only daughter is dying. Every step matters. The crowds press in from every side, and a father's grief races against a clock none of them can stop. Into that urgency, Luke introduces a delay. A woman nobody expected reaches out from behind and touches the edge of a garment, and the whole procession halts.

This is not the only interrupted story in Luke's Gospel, but it is among the most tender. A synagogue ruler with a name, a position, and a household receives his miracle. A woman with no name, no position, and no household of her own receives hers as well, and Jesus treats her need as no less urgent than his. The Lord, on his way to raise the dead, still finds time to stop for the woman the crowd would rather ignore.

There are three great things to see in this brief encounter. There is a **great need** for this woman's twelve years of suffering. There is **great power** in the touch that heals her before a word is even spoken. And there is **great peace** in the word Christ finally speaks over her. Let us look at each in turn.

I. Great Need

And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone. She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, and immediately her discharge of blood ceased.

Twelve years is a long time to suffer. It is longer still to suffer alone. Under the law of Moses, a woman with this kind of ongoing discharge was considered ceremonially unclean, and so was anything and anyone she touched. For twelve years this meant no worship at the temple, no

ordinary contact with her neighbors, and very likely no husband left to stand beside her. Luke tells us she had spent everything she had on physicians and had only grown worse. She was poor in body, poor in purse, and poor in standing, all at once.

Notice how she comes to Jesus. She does not call out. She does not ask permission. She comes up behind him in a crush of people who would recoil from her touch if they knew what she carried, and she reaches for nothing more than the fringe of his garment. This is not confidence. This is a woman who has learned to expect very little, hoping that even the smallest possible contact with this man might be enough.

And it was enough. Immediately, her discharge of blood ceased. Twelve years ended in a moment, and it ended before Jesus had said a single word to her. Whatever kind of faith this was, timid, desperate, half-formed, it was real enough to reach for him, and that was all it needed to be.

Application

Some of you carry a twelve-year kind of weariness this morning. Perhaps it is not a physical ailment. Perhaps it is a habit you cannot break, a shame you have never told anyone, a grief that has drained everything you had to give. You may feel, like this woman, that you have already spent what little you had trying to fix it yourself. Hear this. You do not need bold, confident faith to come to Christ. You only need enough faith to reach. He does not require you to have it all figured out before you come near him. Come to Christ as you are, and He will receive you.

He says to you, “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

II. Great Power

*And Jesus said, **who was it that touched me?** When all denied it, Peter said, Master, the crowds surround you and are pressing in on you. But Jesus said, **someone touched me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me**.*

Peter's answer is understandable. Everyone was touching Jesus. Bodies were pressed in from every direction in that narrow street. But Jesus was not asking about ordinary jostling. Something had gone out from him that was different from the crowd's contact, and he knew it the moment it happened.

This is worth pausing over. The healing did not come from the woman's touch working some kind of magic on a piece of cloth. The power was in Christ himself, and it moved at his own initiative and by his own will, even before he had turned to look at her. He is not a reservoir that anyone can drain by accident. He is a person who acts, who knows, and who gives.

Compare this again with the prophets. Elijah stretched himself out over the widow's son and cried to the Lord. Elisha prayed before the Shunammite's son revived. Even in this Gospel, the touch that heals is not a formula the woman discovered. It is the Son of God recognizing his own power, going out to meet a need, the same power that will soon raise Jairus's daughter from her deathbed. Nothing about this healing is small or accidental. It reaches from the same hand that holds the universe together.

Application

Whatever it is that has drained you for years, Christ has power sufficient for it. Not power in general, but power that acts specifically, deliberately, and immediately when it meets real faith. You are not trying to activate some hidden force by praying the right words or touching the right thing. You are coming to a living Person who already knows what you need before you ask him, and who has never once run out of power to give.

III. Great Peace

And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. And he said to her, ***daughter, your faith has made you well, go in peace****.*

She could have slipped away, healed and unnoticed. The bleeding had stopped. She had what she came for. But Jesus will not let her disappear into the crowd as a nameless recipient of a private miracle. He calls her out, and she comes trembling, and she tells the whole truth in front of everyone.

Think of what that must have cost her, and what it gave her. For twelve years, she had likely hidden this condition out of shame. Now, in front of the very crowd that would have recoiled from her a moment earlier, she is invited to tell her story openly, and Jesus receives it not with rebuke but with a single, tender word. "**Daughter**."

He had never called anyone that before in Luke's Gospel. It is not a word for a stranger healed in passing. It is a word of endearment used in a family.

Think of the difference between a man who comes through a shelter line night after night, and a man who comes through that same line and hears his name. The first man gets a bed, a meal, a blanket, everything he came for, handed to him by someone who has done this a hundred times that week and will do it a hundred more. He is served, and rightly so, but he is served the way a form gets processed. He could vanish from that line tomorrow and no one behind the counter would notice the gap.

Then there is the night when someone looks up before handing over the tray, says his name, asks how his knee has been since the fall, and remembers he takes his coffee black. Nothing material

changes. Same bed, same meal, same blanket. But something in that man straightened a little because, for one moment, he was not a need being met. He was a well-known person.

That is the difference between what the crowd was ready to give this woman and what Jesus actually gave her. The crowd, had they known and been able, might have healed her from a distance and moved on, one problem solved among thousands. Jesus stopped the whole procession to call her daughter. He did not just close the wound. He accepted her and warmly welcomed her into the family of believers.

Our gracious Savior does not merely heal her body and send her on her way. He brings her out of isolation and into a relationship, then says the words that properly conclude the story. "**Your faith has made you well. Go in peace**." The bleeding had already stopped, but the peace, the wholeness, the being seen, named, and welcomed, is its own kind of healing, and it is the greater one.

Application

Christ does not merely solve your problem and let you slip back into the crowd unchanged. He wants to call you by name. If you have spent years hiding your need, your past, your shame, quietly hoping no one asks too many questions, know that the Lord who healed this woman is not interested in a distant, anonymous fix. He wants you to come out of hiding and into his family. He still says to those who come to him in faith, go in peace.

Conclusion

Three things stand out from this brief pause on a crowded road. Great need, a woman who had nothing left to offer but a trembling reach toward the hem of a robe. Great power, a Savior who felt life go out of himself the instant real faith touched him. And great peace, a Savior who would not let her leave unnamed, unseen, or unwelcomed.

If you have never come to this Christ, hear what he said to a woman with nothing to commend her but her need. Your faith has made you well. Go in peace. He still says this to anyone who comes to him empty-handed and trusts him for what only he can give. He lived, died for sinners, and rose again. He is not too busy today to stop for you.

And if you already belong to Him and are still carrying some twelve-year burden that you have never fully brought to Him, bring it to Him right now. He has not grown weary of your reaching for him. He still turns, still sees, and still calls his own by name.